

# 21 st Century Educational Technology and Learning

MAY 21, 2012 · 4:44 PM

## 108 Ways to Use Word Clouds in the Classroom...Word Clouds in Education Series: Part 2

5 Votes



Welcome to a series of posts devoted to the use of Word Clouds. I know you will find new information... whether you are a seasoned user of word clouds, or brand new. I enjoy working with teachers and helping them use word clouds in their lessons because they are a great way to get any teacher started with integrating technology. In the last post you discovered [12 Tips in Using Wordle](#). In fact you may wish to read it if you have not as of yet. This post will share 108 ways for educators to use word clouds in the classroom. There will still be more in this series including:

1. There is more to Word Clouds then Wordle... other awesome word cloud generators
2. Beyond word clouds... cool sites and applications to integrate word clouds

To ensure you do not miss one of these valuable posts or other resources covering PBL, STEM, 21<sup>st</sup> century learning, and technology integration please sign up for 21centuryedtech by email or RSS. As always I invite you to follow me on twitter ([@mjaormans](#)). Please give this post a retweet and pass it on to someone not as familiar with technology and Web 2.0. Word clouds and Wordle are a great starting place for teachers just testing the waters.

**108 Ways to Use Word Clouds in the Classroom** – by Michael Gorman at (<http://21centuryedtech.wordpress.com/>)

I am amazed every time I talk to groups and find out so many educators have not used word clouds with their students. In fact I am so sure that you will enjoy this topic I have come up with 108 ways to use word clouds in the classroom. I have tried to include almost every subject. These are a collection of ideas shared with me, various readings, and a lot of my own brainstorming. I know this will be an article you wish to share with others. In order to better understand some of the advanced uses I suggest you may wish to read Part One of this series entitled, [12 Valuable Wordle Tips You Must Read](#). I am certain you will find at least one new idea... and again please give a retweet. By the way... have an idea I have not listed? Then just take a moment and leave a comment.... I thank you in advance. Let's explore those word clouds!

### All Subjects

1. Put your lesson plan into a word cloud to create a word cloud of what you will be learning about. This could also be part of your entire course outline used at the beginning of a course.
2. Paste a reading from your text into a word cloud. You may wish to turn off common words.
3. Copy and paste a reading from the web into a word cloud. You may wish to turn off common words.
4. Put vocabulary words into a word cloud.
5. Use a word cloud to create a discussion either in class or posted on the web for a discussion forum. Try to create it so that a question of inquiry can be used.
6. Create a group word cloud of the entire class or sub groups in the class. This could be in reaction to a discussion, an idea, a reading, or video. Students work in groups to come up with 20-30 descriptive words and then make a word cloud. Using advanced tools they could rank them or color code them.
7. Each student creates a word cloud in reflection from a discussion, an idea, a reading, or video. Individual comes up with 20-30 descriptive words and then makes a word cloud. Using advanced tools they could rank them or color code them.
8. Entire class creates a word cloud in reaction to a topic. In order to capture student word have them digitally input them using the Web 2.0

tools Write with Me or Google Forms.

9. Have students create word clouds that generate understanding of a concept, standards or vocabulary word.
10. Illustrate classroom thoughts or views using a word cloud to survey students. Favorite university, pro team, singer, etc.
11. Create a class word cloud that highlights class expectation. This can be done by students. Have students use phrases to enter needs to know for upcoming learning, or reflections on what they have learned. These can be collected using Google Forms or Write with Me.
12. Post students first names to create a class or group word cloud.

### Science

1. When classify objects... make a word cloud for each classification. Remember you can make the classification heading bigger.
2. Make word molecules and compounds by putting in the elements by relative numbers of atoms in each compound into a word cloud. Use advanced number feature.
3. Create word clouds for animals in a biome. Remember you can make the classification heading bigger.
4. Create a simple food chain showing representing each population of animal by word size. In fact create a whole food web of an area or biome. Use advanced number feature.
5. Create word clouds to illustrate the elements and all of the uses for each specific element. Each element could be its own word cloud.
6. Have students compare sizes of different planetary objects and make a scalable word cloud of each. Make each planet a different color.
7. Show different climates of different cities showing the scale of city size using average temperature, or rainfall, or snowfall, or your idea.
8. Create a word cloud of different geographical/climate occurrences showing size relationship. Example: Famous Earthquake Magnitudes or places of occurrences.
9. Put both the word and short definitions into a word cloud. Have students find a way to connect the words and definitions. This could be redoing the word cloud with a tilde between words so the go together. It could be color coding the words using the advanced edit feature. Perhaps they just draw lines between them. Could be used to classify items (example: type of rock under its classification) or used as labels to words (Such as label for an element and element).
10. Students create a word cloud of famous scientists or events in science history.
11. Have students make predictions and form a hypothesis. They then shorten them to a phrase and are put into a class word cloud. This allows for a class discussion and students then write their own hypothesis with reasoning and create their own individual word cloud.
12. Have students read a science nonfiction article. Have them create a paragraph or short story using these terms and words in science fiction. With their story they should then create two word clouds. One of the articles that was science fact and the other science fiction. Can members of the class tell the difference?

### Language Arts

1. When classify parts of speech... make a word cloud for each classification. Remember you can make the classification heading bigger.
2. Make a word cloud to illustrate a student writing. Remember to not put personal information that can identify students into word cloud generator.
3. Have a students analyze their frequency of word usage in a writing
4. Compare and contrast persuasive writing using word clouds. This could include student writings or those found in editorials and papers.
5. Create descriptive word clouds to cover descriptions of themes found in a reading or novel. This could include characterization, setting, voice, and plot.
6. Create a word cloud and have students create a story from what they see in the cloud. They can then make a word cloud of their own story.
7. Have students write different poetry such as haiku, free verse, ballads, etc. Have them then create a word cloud for that poem. This could be neat to incorporate shapes using Tagul or Tagxedo.
8. Have students write a book review and put it into a word cloud. Find write ups of books and create word clouds to promote a book.
9. Copy and paste various author and writers styles to see what can be learned. Identify parts of speech to see amount of adverbs, adjectives, etc. How do author and writer styles differ?
10. Have students predict what might happen in a portion of text that is coming next. This can also be used to have students pick out possible important words and meaning of something they just read.
11. Put words in a word cloud that will be part of spelling tests and vocabulary investigations.
12. Have students analyze a selection from various online encyclopedias on a given subject.

### Social Studies

1. Use a word cloud to compare, contrast, discuss, and analyze two presidential speeches. Remember that you can use a word count to analyze and even graph use of popular words.
2. Use a word cloud to compare, contrast, discuss, and analyze two state or country constitutions. Remember that you can use a word count to analyze and even graph use of popular words.
3. Use a word cloud to compare, contrast, discuss, and analyze persuasive speeches in history. Remember that you can use a word count to analyze and even graph use of popular words.
4. Using statistical information from a place such as CIA World Fact Book create word clouds that illustrate country statistics such as resources, ethnic groups, religions, languages, etc. You may wish to use advanced number feature to illustrate prominence of each.
5. Create a word cloud to illustrate how countries of the world (or states in a country) rank with related themes such as oil production, GDP, industries, languages, etc. The heading would be the resource and countries would be in the word cloud showing their rank by size. There could be other variations. Use advanced number feature.
6. Have students create a word cloud that represents geographic ideas such as: oceans of the world or continents of the world.
7. Show a word cloud of different geographic features in their size relationship. Example: Famous Volcanoes.
8. Create a word cloud of famous documents and treaties in history. Have students analyze and discuss.
9. Have students create a word cloud of biographies of famous people in history.
10. Remember that you can use a word count to analyze and even graph use of popular words.
11. Create word clouds to illustrate a period of time or events on a timeline.
12. Wordle a newspaper or magazine article for a current event. A transcript from a radio, television, internet interview, podcast, etc, could also be useful for a class discussion or individual analysis.

### Math

1. Make a word cloud of a math story problem
2. Have students show ratios, proportion, and scale using a word cloud. Use advanced number feature.
3. Have students work out ways to illustrate statistics in a word cloud. Have them work with both advanced numbers and colors.
4. Create word clouds using geometric shapes with vocabulary words to fit in those shapes. Since Wordle cannot do this you will need to use Tagul or Tagxedo.
5. Show units of measurement in a word cloud. Try to scale it by proportion... to some extent where possible. Put each type of measurement such as volume, linear, mass in its own color. Be creative and use both the advanced number and color tool.
6. Create a word cloud that shows a pattern and have students discuss via classroom, groups, or online forum.
7. Have students either spell out or use number values to show relative size of numbers along a number line or place value within the metric system.
8. Create word clouds that display fractions. Example: A word cloud with three different insects, two mammals, four fish, and five birds. Ask for fractions of each animal type.
9. Have students find mathematical papers written by famous mathematicians and create a word cloud of some of their writing. See what words have high occurrence and see what they might mean.
10. Have students analyze a writing and give statistical information using percentages, proportions, and numbers of used words. Remember that you can use a word count to analyze and even popular words. What kinds of graphs might be able to be used to illustrate better?
11. Create a word cloud of standards to be used in the course.
12. Have students come up an original way to use a word cloud to tell a mathematical story.

#### Health and PE and Family and Consumer Sciences

1. Have students keep food journal of what they eat for a week. If they eat French fries three times they record that. They then enter their entire journal entry being sure to give a number value in the advanced more or pasting the word the correct number of times. They should end up with a word cloud of their diet
2. Same as above only now assign each food a color to represent a food group. Use the advanced color mode to color code each food group.
3. Students create a word cloud from a recipe.
4. Students create a word cloud of the ingredients found in a product. Students may even be able to show scale of amount of product or color code nutritional information.
5. Students create a word cloud of items found in different rooms of a house.
6. Students study a family budget and create a word cloud making budget items in proportion to the cost applicable to each item.
7. Students create a word cloud of different occupations to a related field.
8. Students create a word cloud relating to a specific sport.
9. Students make a word cloud of the different human body systems. In groups students work individually on a specific system word cloud and then combine with partners for the total of all the systems. Each system should be in its own color. Use advanced tool for colors.
10. Students make word clouds to represent different diseases, drugs, and medicines.
11. Students create a word cloud to illustrate their favorite athletic personalities and do not include the name. They then present word cloud to class and students try to guess. Finish by including their word cloud as part of a poster with a picture of athlete, name of athlete, and paragraph about him/her.
12. Have students come up with a unique way to display a word cloud in regards to fitness and/or diet.

#### Art and Music

1. Make a word cloud of the lyrics of a song.
2. Make a word cloud of a famous composer, musician, or artist's biography.
3. Gather class, individual, or group input to come up with descriptive words to describe a painting, sculpture, work of art or song. Have a word cloud made of these descriptive words.
4. Make a word cloud that comes under a certain category. This could include artist, time period, instrument, or genre. Have students create a word cloud of one type of classification.
5. Have students experiment with word clouds to make their own work of art. They may wish to use Tagul and Tagxedo to make it even more powerful.
6. Create word clouds for different art projects. They can be CD, DVD covers. Use internet sites to create all sorts of items such as calendars, jigsaw puzzles, etc. at <http://bighugelabs.com/>. Or think about a t-shirt, mugs, and bags at a place like <http://www.zazzle.com/>.
7. Put original lyrics for songs or words for poetry into a word cloud. Superimpose that word cloud over an original picture.
8. Animate a Wordle using stop motion capability.
9. Superimpose a Wordle using green screen capability. This could include a bringing in a person that points and talks about some of the words or objects that appear as the words are described.
10. If a picture paints a thousand words... then why not paint a picture looking at words you have input into a word cloud?
11. Have students create a word cloud gift. It could be a poster or card for a special holiday for friends and family.
12. Students create a word cloud to illustrate their favorite artist or musician and do not include the name. They then present word cloud to class and students try to guess. Finish by including their word cloud as part of a poster with a picture of artist/musician, name of artist/musician, and paragraph about him/her.

#### Foreign Language

1. Have students create a word cloud that highlights the country being studied.
2. Have students create a word cloud of important words to study.
3. Have students word cloud a foreign newspaper article. What are the common words that are used? You may wish to even use show word count. Do it by showing common words. What are the most common? Also, try it with- out common words. Can students tell what the news article may be about before reading?
4. Post vocabulary and spelling words in a word cloud.
5. Put both the English and foreign word into a word cloud. Have students find a way to connect the words. This could be redoing the Wordle with a tilde between words so the go together. It could be color coding the words using the advanced edit feature. Perhaps they just draw lines between them.
6. Create a word cloud of introductory word for discussion by students in class.

7. Have students write a one paragraph reflection on a similar topic in a foreign language. Have them create a word cloud. Combine all the student writings into a class word cloud. Have students compare their individual word clouds with the class word cloud. What discussions and further reflections can be made?
8. Have students write a biography of a famous person from the country studies and include a word cloud of that person.
9. Have students create a word cloud of food items from this country.
10. Have students create a word cloud using statistical information from the country. You may want to incorporate scaling of words and identification of groups using both the advanced edit feature that allow for color and word size.
11. Use Google Translate to translate an American news article into language studied. Make sure it is something very familiar such as movie review, sports story, celebrity, or politics. Create a word cloud and have a class or online discussion of the word cloud. In the end give them the actual article and have them reflect.
12. Have students create a word cloud in the foreign language of an important place or historical event in the country.

### Applied Arts

1. Students create a word cloud of different architectural and engineering terms.
2. Make word cloud of technical directions and have students discuss what seems to stand out.
3. Have students create a word cloud of a famous piece of engineering.
4. Students find create ways to create word clouds that show units of measure including the use of the advanced edit features allowing for color and scale of words.
5. Share word clouds of the upcoming chapter or reading and have a class discussion previewing what will be learned.
6. Students study famous inventors and inventions and create a word clouds.
7. Search for a patent at <http://patft.uspto.gov/netahtml/PTO/search-bool.html> and copy description and students make a word cloud. Students publishes a one sheet publication showing their own picture of patent item, a paragraph on what it is, and their own reflection on usefulness and success.
8. Make a word cloud of terms used in a software program students must learn.
9. Using a timeline, have students create word clouds of a significant event or discovery.
10. Ask students to come up with terms that might lead to a new product or innovation and put the terms in a word cloud in order to brainstorm a new idea.
11. Have students name a physical or math/ scientific principle found in engineering and design. They must then come up with words that are both possibilities and constraints related to the principle. Have them rank the possibilities and constraints and scale them. This should all be put in a word cloud. Also have students color code between possibility and constraint in the word cloud. Make sure the scientific principle is in the word cloud in larger letters and a different color.
12. Have students research and make word clouds of the different occupations found in the applied arts.

*Thank you for joining me in this series on Word Clouds. I hope found new information for use in your school and to share with other educators. As always , I invite you to follow me on twitter ([@mjgormans](https://twitter.com/mjgormans)). Please give this post a retweet and pass it on to someone who will benefit. Watch for other posts in this series including:*

1. *There is more to Word Clouds then Wordle... other awesome word cloud generators*
2. *Beyond word clouds... cool sites and applications to integrate word clouds*

*To ensure you do not miss one of these valuable posts or other resources covering PBL, STEM, 21<sup>st</sup> century learning, and technology integration please sign up for 21centuryedtech by email or RSS. Have a great week... enjoy the passing word clouds! – Mike*  
[\(http://21centuryedtech.wordpress.com/\)](http://21centuryedtech.wordpress.com/)

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## 24 responses to “108 Ways to Use Word Clouds in the Classroom...Word Clouds in Education Series: Part 2”

**Kaylene**

May 21, 2012 at 11:50 pm



Thank you Mike. I made a thank you wordle but couldn't paste it here

[Reply](#)**plerudulier**

May 22, 2012 at 5:02 pm



Reblogged this on [Things I grab](#), [motley collection](#) .

[Reply](#)**rosieparm**

May 22, 2012 at 6:38 pm



Phenomenal..thanks..I'll share with my pre-service teachers

[Reply](#)**mjgormans**

September 20, 2012 at 2:24 am



Thanks for sharing the Wordle with others!

[Reply](#)**greekteacher**

May 31, 2012 at 4:41 am



Reblogged this on [sholio](#).

[Reply](#)**mjgormans**

June 13, 2012 at 1:19 am



Thanks so much for the re-post! – Mike

[Reply](#)

Pingback: [The Best 10 Free Word Cloud Tools for Teachers](#) | [teacherstech.net](#)

**mjgormans**

June 13, 2012 at 12:59 am



Thanks for sharing this with others! – Mike

[Reply](#)**ErikC**

June 12, 2012 at 1:04 pm



Reblogged this on [Erik Champion](#).

[Reply](#)**mjgormans**

June 13, 2012 at 12:57 am



Eric – Thanks for the re-blog! – Mike

[Reply](#)

Pingback: [Word Clouds](#) « [TECflections](#)

**mjgormans**

September 20, 2012 at 2:19 am



Thanks for sharing! – Mike

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**mjgormans**

September 20, 2012 at 2:12 am



Thanks for the reblog

[Reply](#)

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Pingback: TODD'S TECH TUESDAY: Over 100 ways to use word clouds « Differentiation Daily

**mjgormans**

October 23, 2012 at 1:48 pm



Glad you enjoyed the post! – Mike

[Reply](#)

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**Libwithattitude**

April 22, 2013 at 6:13 am



Great post – Tagxedo idea, students upload photo of themselves &amp; create wordcloud of their interests as an introduction to their classmates

[Reply](#)**mjgormans**

September 10, 2013 at 1:55 am



Great idea... and as always check your school AUP! – Mike

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**viljenkaViljenka**

September 3, 2013 at 5:43 am



Fantastic job done. Many thanks from Slovenia. I Scooped it with pleasure. I will pass the word too... Viljenka

[Reply](#)**mjgormans**

September 10, 2013 at 1:00 am



Thank you for the kind words! – Mike

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Pingback: Word Clouds on the iPad | Technology Education

**mjgormans**

September 10, 2013 at 12:58 am



Thanks for the kind words!

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**mjgormans**

January 3, 2014 at 4:40 am



Thanks for sharing! – Mike

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